



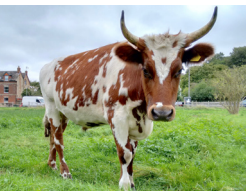
Wolvercote Commoners' NEWSLETTER September 2016

Cattle round-up on Port Meadow & Wolvercote Common makes TV news

The Sheriff's round-up, a tradition going back many generations, took place last month and unusually this year it made the BBC news. The round-up is undertaken annually to count the cattle, to check they are legitimate and to check their health, including their TB status. The care of the meadow and common comes under both Oxford Council and the Wolvercote Commoners. The round-up is a joint effort by both parties but this year included the graziers who added their professional expertise. It kicks off at dawn from the south end of the meadow, finishing with all the cattle safely corralled in the pen by the bathing place. The event is overseen by Julian Cooper, Landscape and Countryside supervisor for Oxford Council and this year it was filmed by the local BBC news. Julian (pictured on the right being interviewed by Jeremy Stern) was called upon to give the background and history of the event. As part of the tradition, the round-up is always followed up by a hearty breakfast at The Plough, Wolvercote.



The cattle are back



The cattle have returned to Wolvercote Green for their autumn grazing. For those who wonder why the cattle are only there for such a short time, this is all part of the care and

management of the green. It is called 'aftermath grazing'. Once the spring/summer growth has been harvested for hay new grass will grow. It's the new grass which the cattle graze. By doing this they further reduce nutrient levels in the soil, thus helping the creation of the 'hay meadow' habitat. Since this regime has been followed the meadow has slowly reverted back to a 'true' hay meadow. We are now lucky to have a meadow which has a much greater variety of flowers, including nearly 5 species of orchid.

THE BATTLE CONTINUES!

Earlier this year the commoners employed contractors in an attempt to eradicate the weed 'Crassula Helmsii'. It is a very invasive non-native weed and not common to the area but, as the area has SSSI status, it must be controlled. Not only was the clearing procedure extremely expensive, it also failed to completely clear everything. It was therefore decided to try an alternative method using a flame gun (kindly loaned by the allotment association). Therefore, following a successful trial run, we opted to tackle a larger area as part of our October work session. So, in future if you see someone wielding a flame thrower on the common, don't worry it's only aimed at our old enemy crassula!



Don't forget Village Work Mornings second Saturday of every month

Meet outside the Village Hall at 10am (Bring gloves/wellies). Children welcome

www.wolvercotecommoners.co.uk - wolvercote.commoners@yahoo.co.uk

Chair: Angie Goff (01865 554040) Secretary: Mary Brown (01865 236897)